Chapter 10: Public Services and Facilities Element

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I. Introduction

As the County continues to grow, the demand for public facilities and infrastructure will increase. This Element provides a summary of some of the major public services and facilities that serve the County, and establishes policies that guide the provision of public services and facilities in conjunction with the County's projected growth.

The Public Services and Facilities Element addresses the General Plan Guiding Principles with a strategy to provide Sufficient Community Services and Infrastructure for the unincorporated areas. Important community issues, such as water supply and waste disposal are covered in this Element, and are vital components of promoting Healthy, Livable, and Equitable Communities and Smart Growth principles. A strong public services and facilities system also works toward Environmental Resource Management principles by improving the County's service systems to be efficient and energy sensitive, which in turn protects open space and environmentally sensitive areas. Finally, strong service provision and infrastructure is an important factor for ensuring a Strong and Diversified Economy.

The Public Services and Facilities Element promotes the orderly and efficient planning of public facilities and infrastructure in conjunction with land use development and growth. This Element focuses on services and facilities that are affected the most by growth and development: Water; Wastewater and Sewer; Solid Waste; Utilities; Early Care and Education; and Libraries. The Element also discusses the key role of collaboration among County agencies in efficient and effective service provision and facilities planning.

This Element works in conjunction with the Los Angeles County Department of Public Works (DPW) Strategic Plan, which outlines service delivery goals for sanitary sewer, water supply, flood control, garbage disposal, and traffic lighting within the County; Standard Urban Stormwater Mitigation Plan; Integrated Waste Management Plan; Sewer System Management Plan; Library Strategic Plan; and other plans to address the provision of public services and facilities to the unincorporated areas.

II. Effective Service and Facilities Planning and Maintenance

Background

There are special development fees and legal requirements in place to address the provision of services or facilities and infrastructure, including school facilities fees, sewer connection mitigation fees, fire protection facilities fees, library facilities mitigation fees, and water supply assessments for large projects.

Issues

1. Development Fees

Many of the County's existing public facilities are operating at full capacity or are overburdened. In addition, many development fees and legal requirements that are intended to pay for infrastructure and services only apply to certain developments, such as subdivisions and projects that exceed a certain size threshold.

2. The Need to Effectively Track Development

In addition to fees, a comprehensive system is necessary to effectively track planned development and corresponding infrastructure and service needs. Coordination among various County departments ensures that infrastructure is upgraded, as well as expanded in areas, such as the County's Transit Oriented Districts (TODs), where General Plan encourages development.

Without adequate investment from the public sector to maintain and upgrade existing infrastructure, the costs of infrastructure improvements could make a project financially infeasible. As the General Plan promotes growth in urbanized infill areas, the County will benefit from the long-term reduction in

future infrastructure costs, as various studies show that the costs to providing public infrastructure and services, such as roads, water, sewerage systems, and garbage collection tend to increase with sprawl.

Goals and Policies for Effective Service and Facilities Planning and Maintenance

Goal PS/F 1: A coordinated, reliable, and equitable network of public facilities that preserves resources, ensures public health and safety, and keeps pace with planned development.	
Topic	**Policy**
Sufficient Infrastructure	Policy PS/F 1.1: Discourage development in areas without adequate public services and facilities.
	Policy PS/F 1.2: Ensure that adequate services and facilities are provided in conjunction with development through phasing or other mechanisms.
	Policy PS/F 1.3: Ensure coordinated service provision through collaboration between County departments and service providers.
	Policy PS/F: 1.4: Ensure the adequate maintenance of infrastructure.
	Policy PS/F 1.5: Focus infrastructure investment, maintenance and expansion efforts where the General Plan encourages growth, such as TODs.
	Policy PS/F 1.6: Support multi-faceted public facility expansion efforts, such as substations, mobile units, and satellite offices.

III. Drinking Water

Background

The County provides a continuous supply of clean water for everyday uses through a complex water management system, which consists of numerous water providers, water control boards and other agencies. The County's mix of local and imported water supplies is delivered through an intricate system of aqueducts, reservoirs, and groundwater basins.

Water Sources

Approximately 33 percent of the County’s water supply comes from local sources, including surface water from mountain runoff, groundwater and recycled water. While local water supplies are the least costly, surface water and groundwater supplies fluctuate in response to variations in annual rainfall, contamination and effectiveness of conservation measures.

Other than what falls as rain, water is imported into the County from three sources: the Colorado River, the Bay Delta in Northern California via the State Water Project, and the Owens Valley via the Los Angeles Aqueduct. The Los Angeles Aqueduct primarily serves the residents and businesses of the City of Los Angeles.

For a description of the County’s local water sources, please refer to the Conservation and Natural Resources Element. For description of the imported water sources, please refer to Appendix I.

Water Suppliers

Water services in the County are provided by a complex network of water districts, water wholesalers and private companies that specialize in developing and improving water service for their customers. Most of the imported water utilized in the unincorporated areas is provided by the Metropolitan Water District, Castaic Lake Water Agency, Antelope Valley/East Kern Water Agency, Littlerock Creek Irrigation District and the Palmdale Water District. For a description of water suppliers, please refer to Appendix I.

Water Management Plans

In accordance with the California Urban Water Management Planning Act of 1983, every urban water supplier that annually serves 3,000 or more customers, or provides more than 3,000 acre feet of water, must prepare and adopt an Urban Water Management Plan (UWMP). These plans contain a description and evaluation of water supplies, reclamation programs, and conservation activities. Based upon land use plans provided by local governments, population projections or other inputs, the UWMP calculates the projected water demand for the district and compares this demand against current and anticipated water supplies. These UWMPs, which are updated every five years, are provided to local governments to help inform decisions on development proposals.

UWMPs serve as building blocks for Integrated Regional Water Management Plans (IRWMPs), which define a clear vision and strategy for the sustainable management of water resources within a specific region delineated by one or more watersheds. Local and County UWMPs can be found on the Southern California Association of Government's web site at http://www.scag.ca.gov/rcp/uwmp.htm.

Issues

Drought, pollution, population growth and land use affect the quantity and quality of local and regional water supplies. The County's climate is characterized by extended periods of dry weather and varying levels of rainfall, which range from an average of 27.5 inches per year in the San Gabriel Mountains to 7.8 inches in the Antelope Valley. The overall demand for water is projected to increase dramatically to 2035, and the cost, quality and availability of water will affect future development patterns.

1. Water Conservation

The County needs to reduce its reliance on imported water sources. Voluntary conservation measures by industries and residents have been successful in the past, particularly with regard to outdoor water use. Two thirds of residential water use is attributed to landscape maintenance, which makes conservation measures such as planting drought tolerant, indigenous plants an important component of a water conservation policy.

The conservation of the County's water supply is a primary goal of the County. To reduce the County's dependence on imported water, County agencies are establishing various water conservation programs. One example from DPW is the creation of water reclamation projects and groundwater recharge facilities to capture stormwater runoff. In 2000, County conservation efforts captured 220,000 acre feet of local stormwater runoff that was valued at $80 million. Another effort by DPW is participation in a Water Augmentation Study, which is striving to make parcel-level groundwater recharge feasible. Additional actions include the County Board of Supervisor's 2008 Countywide Water Supply and Conservation Alert. This resolution urges County residents, businesses, and water purveyors to intensify water conservation efforts and directs all County

departments to implement measures to achieve a 15 to 20 percent reduction in overall water demand.

The General Plan supports water conservation efforts that focus on curbing demand by reducing consumption through technological advances, such as aerators and motion sensors on low flush toilets and stalls, onsite gray water reclamation and dual plumbing; promoting xeriscaping; and organizing educational campaigns to discourage wasteful water consumption.

2. Increasing the Water Supply

Recycled water is used primarily for recharging groundwater aquifers through regional groundwater recharge operations and injection at seawater barriers. Other uses of recycled water include irrigating landscaping and supplying industrial processes. Recycled water provides a reliable and consistently high quality supply of water, but also requires additional infrastructure and modifications to regulations that govern the use of recycled water, before it can reach its full supply potential.

Several water agencies throughout Southern California, such as the Metropolitan Water District, Castaic Lake Water Agency and City of Los Angeles Department of Water and Power, are taking the steps to add desalinated water to their list of water supplies. Desalination, or removing salt from ocean water, has the potential to increase the local water supply, but is also energy consumptive and costly.

Goals and Policies for Drinking Water

Goal PS/F 2: Increased water conservation efforts.	
Topic	**Policy**
Water Conservation	Policy PS/F 2.1: Implement water conservation measures, such as drought tolerant landscaping and restrictions on water used for landscaping.
	Policy PS/F 2.2: Support educational outreach efforts that discourage wasteful water consumption.

Goal PS/F 3: Increased local water supplies through the use of new technologies.	
Topic	**Policy**
Water Supply	Policy PS/F 3.1: Increase the supply of water though the development of new sources, such as recycled water, gray water, and rainwater harvesting.
	Policy PS/F 3.2: Support the increased production, distribution and use of recycled water, gray water, and rainwater harvesting to provide for groundwater recharge, seawater intrusion barrier injection, irrigation, industrial processes and other beneficial uses.

IV. Wastewater and Sewer

Background

The management of wastewater effluent and raw sewage in the County involves a complex mix of service providers to cover its large population and vast geographic area. The primary providers of wastewater management services for the unincorporated areas include the Los Angeles County Sanitation Districts, DPW, and municipal septic or wastewater systems.

Construction operations and the maintenance of facilities that collect, treat, recycle and dispose of sewage and industrial wastes is the responsibility of the Los Angeles County Sanitation Districts. Local sewers and laterals connected to the Los Angeles County Sanitation District's trunk sewer lines in the unincorporated areas are the responsibility of DPW.

The Los Angeles County Sanitation Districts, which are a confederation of 24 independent districts, serve the wastewater and solid waste management needs of approximately 5.2 million people, cover over 800 square miles and service 78 cities and the unincorporated areas. As of 2005, the Los Angeles County Sanitation Districts owned, operated and maintained 1,340 miles of sewers that conveyed 510 million gallons per day (gpd) of wastewater, 200 million gpd of which is recycled, to 11 wastewater treatment plants. The service areas for the County's sewer systems include the Joint Outfall System, which is a partnership of 17 of the 24 independent sanitation districts, the Santa Clarita Valley and the Antelope Valley.

DPW maintains 5,200 miles of main line sewers, 255 pumping stations and four sewage treatment plants. The DPW Environmental Programs Division also permits and inspects industrial waste discharge into local sewers. The County Code requires that every business that disposes industrial wastewater obtain a permit. The Sewer System Management Plan controls and mitigates sewer sanitary overflows. For more information on the SSMP, please visit DPW's web site at http://ladpw.org.

Issues

Sewer and Wastewater Management

Sewer systems in certain parts of the unincorporated areas are aging and require upgrades. The County does not plan for sewer infrastructure needs through long-range capital improvement planning, and instead addresses sewer infrastructure in a piecemeal fashion.

The treatment of stormwater runoff in wastewater management systems is a serious concern in the County, particularly because stormwater runoff contains pollutants, including heavy metals, pesticides, herbicides, fertilizer, animal waste, trash, food waste, fuels, oils, solvents, lubricants and grease. The collection of these pollutants into stormwater channels, which have traditionally been discharged directly into the Pacific Ocean, is a serious water quality issue.

Goals and Policies for Wastewater and Sewer

Goal PS/F 4: A reliable network of wastewater systems in the County.	
Topic	**Policy**

Wastewater Systems	Policy PS/F 4.1: Encourage the planning and continued development of efficient countywide wastewater systems.
	Policy PS/F 4.2: Support capital improvement plans to improve aging and deficient wastewater systems, particularly in areas where the General Plan encourages development, such as TODs.
	Policy PS/F 4.3: Ensure the proper design of sewage treatment and disposal facilities, especially in landslide, hillside, and other hazard areas.

V. Solid Waste

Background

The County has the largest solid waste management system in the country. There are seven major solid waste landfills, four minor solid waste landfills and two waste to energy facilities that serve the County, as shown in Figure 10.1. In 2009, the County generated, on average, 64,780 tons of solid waste per day (tpd). As available space for landfills becomes scarce and more distant, and as local landfills reach their holding capacity, cities and counties have been mandated to more effectively manage waste and reduce their solid waste volume.

Figure 10.1: Landfills

The 2009 Annual Report for the Los Angeles County Integrated Waste Management Plan (IWMP) describes the County's strategy for maintaining adequate disposal capacity through 2024. Provided certain assumptions are met, the County would meet its disposal capacity needs by permitting and developing all in-County landfill expansions; utilizing out-of-County disposal capacity; developing necessary infrastructure to facilitate the export of waste to out-of-County landfills; and developing facilities that utilize conversion technologies to the extent that is technically and economically feasible. The development of out-of-County disposal capacity, markets for recovered materials and conversion technologies are anticipated to meet the expanding needs for the County. In 2009, the County exported over 5,700 tpd to landfills in neighboring counties. In order to meet future disposal needs, the County will continue to export more waste to these landfills.

The County has a number of countywide diversion, source reduction and household hazardous waste programs. In 2006, the countywide diversion rate, or the rate of waste that has been diverted from landfills through recycling and other programs, was 58 percent, which is comparable to the statewide rate (54 percent). In that year, the County disposed of approximately 12 million tons of waste.

For more information on the County's waste management programs, please visit the DPW Environmental Programs Division web site at http://www.CleanLA.org. For more information on the County's solid waste disposal data, please visit http://www.LACountySWIMS.org.

Issues

1. Waste Generation and Disposal Capacity

The major issues regarding waste management in the County include the growing amounts of waste being generated and disposed of; a shortage of solid waste processing facilities; and strong public

opposition for new solid waste management facilities. Table 10.1 lists the remaining permitted capacity for landfills in the County. Based on 2009 waste disposal figures, without major expansions to existing landfills, the County's current disposal system has approximately five years of remaining capacity left. In 2013, the Puente Hills Landfill, the largest landfill in the County, will close. At that time, a significant percentage of the County's solid waste may have to be exported to facilities out of the County, which may result in increased costs and environmental impacts. This concern is exacerbated by the projected increase in waste generation to approximately 92,455 tpd within the next 15 years.

Table 10.1: Remaining Permitted Disposal Capacity for Los Angeles County Landfills

Landfill	Maximum Daily Capacity (Tons)	Estimated Remaining Permitted Capacity (Million Tons)*	Remaining Life (Years)**
Antelope Valley	1,400	7.36	28
Burbank	240	3.12	44
Calabasas	3,500	7.53	16
Chiquita Canyon	6,000	7.32	10
Lancaster	1,700	13.1	3
Pebbly Beach	49	0.06	18
Puente Hills	13,200	14.35	4***
San Clemente	10	0.04	23
Scholl Canyon	3,400	5.06	15
Sunshine Canyon (City/County)	12,100	80.63	28
Whittier (Savage Canyon)	350	3.35	39
Total	**43,749**	**141.92**	

Source: Los Angeles County Integrated Waste Management Plan, 2009 Annual Report, February 2011.

*Estimated remaining permitted capacity based on landfill owner/operator responses in a written survey conducted by the Los Angeles County Department of Public Works in August 2010, as well as a review of site specific permit criteria established by local land use agencies, local enforcement agencies, California Regional Water Quality Control Board, and the South Coast Air Quality Management District.

**Landfill remaining life as permitted in 2009.

***The Puente Hills Landfill will close in October 31, 2013.

Solid waste enterprises within the County are proponents of Material Recovery Facilities/Transfer Stations to provide additional infrastructure to help meet the County's future disposal needs. The Los Angeles County Sanitation Districts completed the acquisition of the Mesquite Regional Landfill in

Imperial County and has signed a purchase agreement for the acquisition of the Eagle Mountain Landfill. Mesquite Landfill has a permitted capacity of 20,000 tpd and a 100-year lifespan. The Los Angeles County Sanitation Districts are developing a waste by rail system that could transport up to 8,000 tpd to the Mesquite Landfill.

2. Promoting Alternative Technologies

Faced with a dwindling landfill capacity, as well as the impacts of climate change, the County must evaluate sustainable options for solid waste management, such as conversion technologies and landfill gas to energy facilities. The Los Angeles County Sanitation Districts currently have three landfill gas to energy facilities that generate electrical power from landfill gas. Landfill gas is created through the natural decomposition of refuse and has about half the energy content of natural gas. Conversion technologies refer to a wide variety of biological, mechanical, chemical, and thermal (excluding incineration) processes that convert residual post recycled municipal solid waste and other organic feedstock into useful products, alternative fuels and clean and renewable energy. Additionally, utilizing conversion technologies locally could effectively enhance recycling, reduce pollution and greenhouse gas emissions, extend the life of existing landfills and reduce dependence on fossil fuels. Conversion technologies are currently being explored by the County in conjunction with the Alternative Technology Advisory Subcommittee, which is comprised of a diverse group of representatives from public agencies, industry, community, and other experts in the field of conversion technologies. As a part of the Southern California Conversion Technology Demonstration Project, on April 20, 2010, the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors approved agreements to develop three conversion technology demonstration projects, and instructed DPW to begin evaluating options for the development of commercial-scale projects in the County. For more information, please visit the Southern California Conversion Technology Demonstration Project web site at http://www.socalconversion.org.

3. Trash Hauling

For many years, two-thirds of the unincorporated areas (primarily the San Gabriel and Antelope Valleys), residential and commercial solid waste collection services were provided through an open-market system whereby each resident/business directly arranged for trash collection services with no County involvement. Due to changes in federal and state laws regarding waste reduction, changing public attitudes toward protecting the environment and increasing consumer demands for better service, the open-market system was unable to fully adapt to these conditions. In response, beginning in 2007, DPW gradually implemented a residential trash collection franchise system to replace the open-market system. Under the franchise system, the County signs an agreement with waste haulers to authorize them to provide exclusive services for individual communities; and, the County establishes minimum service standards, and institutes rate control measures. The franchise system has helped to improve customer service, increase accountability, develop cleaner neighborhoods and increase diversion rates. As of early 2011, 14 residential franchises have been established throughout San Gabriel Valley and Santa Clarita Valley. DPW anticipates replacing the remaining residential open-market system areas, including the Antelope Valley, as early as 2014. In regards to the commercial open market system, DPW anticipates replacing it with a franchise system by mid 2012.

Trash collection service in the remaining third of the unincorporated areas (located in South Los Angeles and Malibu areas) is provided through a garbage disposal district system. Under this system, the County issues a contract for a waste hauler to provide service to both residents and businesses. Operational expenses are paid from revenues generated through special property tax assessments. To date, the County has established seven garbage disposal districts, which are the only ones operating in the State.

Goals and Policies for Solid Waste

Goal PS/F 5: Adequate disposal capacity and minimal waste and pollution in the County.	
Topic	**Policy**
Waste Management	Policy PS/F 5.1: Maintain an efficient, safe and responsive waste management system that reduces waste while protecting the health and safety of the public.
	Policy PS/F 5.2: Ensure adequate disposal capacity by providing for environmentally sound and technically feasible development of solid waste management facilities, such as landfills and transfer/processing facilities.
	Policy PS/F 5.3: Discourage incompatible land uses near or adjacent to solid waste disposal facilities identified in the Countywide Integrated Waste Management Plan.
Waste Diversion	Policy PS/F 5.4: Encourage solid waste management facilities that utilize conversion and other alternative technologies and waste to energy facilities.
	Policy PS/F 5.5: Reduce the County's waste stream by minimizing waste generation and enhancing diversion.
	Policy PS/F 5.6: Encourage the use and procurement of recyclable and biodegradable materials throughout the County.
	Policy PS/F 5.7: Encourage the recycling of construction and demolition debris generated by public and private projects.
	Policy PS/F 5.8: Ensure adequate and regular waste and recycling collection services.
	Policy PS/F 5.9: Encourage the availability of trash and recyclables containers in new developments, public streets, and large venues.

VI. Utilities

Background

The County's utility infrastructure, information and communication networks are layered with utility rights of way and properties that contain tower structures, substations, generating plants, pipelines, storage fields, valve stations, wells, radio and television studios and other equipment facilities. In the unincorporated areas, most electric, natural gas, or telecommunication services are delivered by private service providers. However, the County recognizes the need to define and ensure adequate levels of service in these areas as the County continues to grow.

Issues

1. Energy Conservation

The County is faced with considerable strain on existing electricity and power delivery systems. As a result of increased electricity usage and prolonged hot weather conditions due to climate change, brown outs, or losses of power and forced reductions in electricity delivery, occur periodically

throughout the State. There is a need to upgrade the County's power grid and service capabilities, and to educate the public on energy conservation. Upgrades and enhancements of local services and strong energy conservation programs can add to the reliability and efficiency of the overall utility network, and contribute to the long-term quality of life for County residents and businesses.

Similarly, the region's substantial population growth is outpacing the development of new natural gas supplies, much of which is imported from out of state. In addition to heating and cooking, natural gas currently provides 73 percent to 90 percent of the energy used to generate electricity, especially during peak times. As the population continues to grow, the County must focus on the development of new natural gas supplies, including locally produced natural gas and liquefied natural gas (LNG); upgrading and enhancing the region's natural gas infrastructure system to improve reliability and efficiency; strong energy conservation programs; and renewable energy alternatives.

A major contributor to the long-term energy independence of the County will be the increased production of energy from renewable sources. The production of energy from renewable sources onsite can also ensure the ongoing operations of primary health, safety and civic infrastructure during times of disruption. The County is a participant in the Statewide Renewable Energy Transmission Initiative (RETI), which identifies sites that are suitable for various types of renewable energy sources, including geothermal, solar, wind and biomass. This issue is discussed in greater detail in the Conservation and Natural Resources Element.

2. Siting Facilities

It is important for the County to address land use compatibility in siting infrastructure facilities that are necessary for the delivery of energy and information resources. Siting utility infrastructure and facilities is difficult, as many parts of the County are built out with little room for facility expansion. In certain areas, there is public opposition to the expansion or placement of utility infrastructure. In the case of new natural gas storage facilities, there is added difficulty in finding locations with specific geologic conditions to ensure efficiency and reliability.

Goals and Policies for Utilities

Goal PS/F 6: A County with adequate public utilities.	
Topic	**Policy**
Utility Infrastructure	Policy PS/F 6.1: Ensure efficient and cost effective utilities that serve existing and future needs.
	Policy PS/F 6.2: Improve existing wired and wireless telecommunications infrastructure.
	Policy PS/F 6.3: Expand access to wireless technology networks, while minimizing visual impacts through co-location and design.
	Policy PS/F 6.4: Protect utility facilities to ensure the continued provision of utility services in the County.
	Policy PS/F 6.5: Encourage the use of renewable energy sources in utility and telecommunications networks.
	Policy PS/F 6.6: Encourage the construction of utilities underground, where feasible.

	Policy PS/F 6.7: Encourage projects that incorporate onsite renewable energy systems.

VII. Early Care and Education Facilities

Background

The County's role in developing and managing educational facilities and programs is limited. However, the Los Angeles County Office of Education (COE), which is the country's largest regional education agency, serves as an intermediary between the local school districts and the California Department of Education. The COE is guided by a seven member County Board of Education, which is appointed by the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors. The COE provides a vision statement and strategic opportunities for educational facility development to coordinate the assessment of facility needs and the construction of schools that fall to individual school districts throughout the County. For more information, please visit the COE web site at http://www.lacoe.edu.

Another role that the County plays in coordinating in public school facilities is through the County subdivision approval process, in which developers are required to assess the need for, and in some cases provide, land for the construction of public schools within their development. Development impact fees, based on the size of a development, are distributed to the appropriate school district for the construction of school facilities before the County issues any building permits.

Issues

Land Use Coordination

At a minimum, the California Education Code requires public school districts to notify the local planning agency when siting new public schools to determine if the proposed site conforms to the General Plan. In addition, school districts consult with the County through the CEQA process.

As educational facilities are major components of, and significantly impact neighborhoods, it is essential for the County to work proactively with school districts and other educational providers to ensure the coordination between land use planning and school facilities planning. Joint-use school facilities, as opposed to stand alone institutions, can benefit communities and create operational and economic efficiencies. School facilities should be accessible and open to multiple users, including students and the greater community.

As discussed in the Land Use Element and the Economic Development Element, there is a shortage of early care and education facilities in the County. According to the 2011 Los Angeles County Child Care and Development Needs Assessment, the availability of licensed care facilities varies by age. For infant/toddlers, there are sufficient facilities to accommodate only one out of every seven children in working families; for preschool-age children, there are three spaces for every four children; for school-age children requiring after school care while parents work, there is one licensed space for every three children. Half-day preschool options are available for seven out of every ten eligible children of three and four years who are able to use a half-day program. For more information on 2011 Child Care Needs Assessment, please visit the CEO Office of Child Care web site at http://childcare.lacounty.gov.

Goals and Policies for Early Care and Education Facilities

Goal PS/F 7: A County with adequate educational facilities.	
Topic	**Policy**
Early Care and Educational Facilities	Policy PS/F 7.1: Encourage the joint-use of school sites for community activities and other appropriate uses.
	Policy PS/F 7.2: Proactively work with school facilities and education providers to coordinate land use and facilities planning.
	Policy PS/F 7.3: Encourage adequate facilities for early care and education.

VIII. Libraries

Background

The County of Los Angeles Public Library is one of the largest public library systems in the country. In fiscal year 2009-2010, the Library staff circulated 16.8 million items to 3.3 million cardholders; answered over 10 million reference questions; provided 19,000 programs to 515,000 children, teens, and adults; and assisted the public with three million internet sessions on the Library's public access computers. The Los Angeles County Library system is a special fund County department operating under the direction of the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors. Figure 10.2 identifies the County libraries and service planning areas.

Figure 10.2: Libraries

Supplementing the 5.8 million volume book collection, the Library also offers magazines, newspapers, microfilm, government publications, specialized reference materials, magazines, audio-visual media, adult, teen and children programs, downloadable audio and ebooks, and internet access, including WiFi.

For more information on the Library system, please refer to the County of Los Angeles Library Strategic Plan, which can be viewed at http://www.colapublib.org/aboutus/strategic.html.

Library Facilities Mitigation Fees

The County applies a library facilities mitigation fee to new residential developmentss in unincorporated areas. This fee is intended to mitigate the significant adverse impacts of increased residential development on the County Library system. The library facilities mitigation fee is based on the estimated cost of providing the projected library facility needs in each library planning area. Table 10.2 shows these fees as of July 1, 2011.

Table 10.2: County Public Library Facilities Mitigation Fees (2011)

Planning Area (P.A.)	Fee (per dwelling unit)
P.A. 1: Santa Clarita Valley	$829.00
P.A. 2: Antelope Valley	$804.00
P.A. 3: West San Gabriel Valley	$839.00
P.A. 4: East San Gabriel Valley	$827.00
P.A. 5: Southeast	$830.00
P.A. 6: Southwest	$836.00
P.A. 7: Santa Monica Mountains	$832.00

The mitigation fee in each of the seven planning areas is reviewed annually by the County Librarian, in consultation with the County Auditor Controller, and is adjusted every July 1. No adjustment shall increase or decrease the fee to an amount more or less than the amount necessary to recover the cost of providing applicable library facilities and services.

The provisions of the Library Facilities Mitigation Fee Ordinance are applicable to residential projects only. All library facilities mitigation fees received by the County are deposited into a special library capital facilities fund (one for each library planning area), and expended solely for the purposes for which the fees were collected.

Issues

Library Facility Needs

The majority of the County's 86 libraries are undersized and understocked to meet the service needs of current and projected populations served by the County Library system. A study conducted by the County Library in April 2001 determined that many of the County's libraries do not meet basic facility and service planning guidelines. The current guideline for library facility space is a minimum of 0.5 gross square foot per capita. The 2001 study determined that 89 percent of existing libraries will not meet that standard in the year 2020. In addition, the study determined that by 2020, 77 percent of existing libraries will not meet the County Library's current service level planning guideline of 2.75 items (books and other library materials) per capita.

Many existing County libraries are located in areas with little or no new residential development, and therefore, there are no mitigation fees or other reliable sources of capital funding available to replace or expand them. A permanent source of funding to replace or expand existing facilities is needed to meet the projected population growth in the County Library's service area over the next two decades.

Goals and Policies for Libraries

Goal PS/F 8: A comprehensive public library system.	
Topic	**Policy**
Library System	Policy PS/F 8.1: Ensure a desired level of library service through coordinated land use and facilities planning.
	Policy PS/F 8.2: Support library mitigation fees that adequately address the impacts of new development.

[Text Box]

Constituent Service Centers and Environmental Service Centers

Due to geographic spread and demographic characteristics, there is a need to establish a number of local centers that can address specific constituent needs and requests, in close proximity to homes and places of work. Constituent Service Centers provide high quality, public services at conveniently located facilities. Specific County department presence will be tailored to each community's needs, including but not limited to community meeting rooms, libraries, senior community centers, and field offices for various County departments such as Consumer Affairs, Sheriff, Planning and Building and Safety. Additional services could include Adult Protective Services, and space for community-based organizations. Constituent Service Centers include the East Los Angeles Civic Center, and two in Florence-Firestone and Lennox.

Environmental Service Centers are Constituent Service Centers that provide assistance to the community on environmental initiatives, such as the County's Green Building Program, AB 811 and the PACE program. County staff is available to answer questions about retrofits, water conservation, and the County's Green Building policies. An Environmental Service Center is located in West Athens-Westmont.

Table 10.3 Public Services and Facilities Element Implementation Programs

Planning Area Capital Improvement Plans
Water Conservation Ordinance
Agricultural Water Conservation Program